

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and unbiased programming.

Sinclair and Clear-Channel use the public airwaves free of charge, and are obligated by law to serve the public interest. Right now, what's best for the public interest is to allow equal time for ALL candidates, and not let the special interest groups dictate what the uninformed masses hears. There is more at stake here than how much money one corporation makes.

But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. When large corporations own more than one type of media format, in more than one area, viewers become a marketing demographic, a number on a far off graph.

Sinclair's and Clear-Channel's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.